LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of Labour Unity
Founded 1921
Editor: R. Palme Dutt

TLD

Arms and the Man	*	R.P.D.
New Poems	*	Mao Tse-tung
The Clash in Engineering	*	T. Graham
Workers' Councils	*	Andrew Rothstein
The New Nihilists	*	John Berger
Dona Torr	*	Allen Hutt

Marx Family Letters

Labour Discussion Forum

March, 1957

One shilling and sixpence

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UNITY, NOT UNIFORMITY

SINCE LAST MONTH when we published the first half dozen answers to our appeal, we have had many more, and very interesting ones too. I won't say, of just the same kind; because they come from people of very different background, experience, occupation. United as to their object they are infinitely varied as personalities. In fact, they defy the dull, 'grey uniformity' in which a class society would straight-jacket us. Glancing quickly through my file I see trade union officials and Labour Party officials, a Communist literature secretary, old age pensioners, Canadian and American readers (including a prominent Negro leader), the ever-faithful old guarantors as well as people who are contributing for the first time.

'Oliver Twist' of *Kent* has certainly been asking for more since he wrote his appeal in verse last month. Having started as a collector he says 'it is to be hoped that the net will be cast wider and wider, so that the fund becomes more dependable without bearing too heavily on a few. Happily for the cause of progress', he remarks, 'the fate of a journal does not necessarily depend upon advertising revenue, as your *Unstable Giants* makes very clear. A pretty general support to its fund by readers may well be able to guarantee L.M. safety'. Quite! It depends upon the quality of the magazine; upon the quality of the readers; and upon how widely they themselves cast the net. A Roland for his Oliver comes in a crisp letter from an old age pensioner who clearly has learned the art of socialist education in vintage years. Writing from *Nottingham*, he says: 'I too heard the sound of the "tucket", also suspected an urgent drum-beat. In my youth it was the "clarion" call of Robert Blatchford. Later we helped poor old George Lansbury to keep the *Herald* afloat: the present *Herald* is not worth support. Well, we must not lose Notes of the Month, your own gentle pleading, Quæstor, Ivor Montagu and others; so once again an old age pensioner rifles his money-box to send you the enclosed. Wish it could be a regular performance, but troublesome Toryism forbids'. A Scot writes: 'Long life and the best of health to "Oliver Twist", and may he be victorious over all the Bumbles that ever were. I am happy to see the beginnings of a response to your appeal, and hope to see it grow to a flood that will raise L.M. right to the top financially as it has always been by merit.'

A *Midlands* reader, active in affairs of his Divisional Labour Party, sends 'another 2s. 6d. to help our David in the world of journals to keep going while the "unstable giants" fall. It is surprising, by the way, how much of the scriptures can be likened to progressive literature today. Certainly the oppressors then took over the ideas of those early Christians and used them to their advantage, as the Macmillans and Dulles of today use our deep desire for peace and brotherhood as the touchstone of the propa-

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Notes of the Month

Arms and the Man

'An army is of little value in the field unless there are wise counsels at home.'

CICERO.

FORTY-ONE per cent of the population of Britain, according to the latest Gallup Poll, would wish to emigrate if they had the chance. Previously, at the end of 1955, the proportion was twenty-eight per cent. A somewhat grim commentary on the outcome of six years of Tory rule. Of what avail for Tory Cabinet Ministers to proclaim with monotonous reiteration in every speech that Britain is 'not down and out' and remains 'great', when the people, and especially the younger people, appear to be taking a different and dimmer view? Lest the Labour Front Bench preen themselves prematurely, as if this were only an exposure of Tory rule, it may be recalled that a similar high point was reached at the zenith of the Attlee-Bevin-Cripps era, in the spring of 1948, when forty-two per cent wished to leave Britain. Thus we have here a

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phenomenon of the post-war decade, that is, of the deepening disintegration and rotting of British imperialism, the increasingly manifest bankruptcy of the policies founded upon it, and the disillusionment of wide masses of the people who have not yet found their way to the positive alternative represented by socialism.

Caelum, Non Animum

'They change their sky, not their soul, who run across the sea,' said the old Roman poet. The British refugees, who imagine they will find an individual solution of the problems of their social, economic and political existence in Canada, are likely to receive a further course of continued education in the nature of capitalism during the coming years, as the unstable basis of the present boom conditions in that economic dependency of the United States are revealed. You cannot contract out of the consequences of capitalism by private treaty. The world is drawn today into an ever closer net of cause and effect. The guided missiles speed across the globe faster than the movement of day and night. Not even the millionaires can find any longer a permanent safe haven, whether in the Riviera, as they imagined during the inter-war years until the Nazis came, or today in Bermuda or South America. Mankind is caught today in a common dilemma which only collective action can solve. It is no us trying to run away from capitalism, when the task is to end it. For the overwhelming majority of the British people, who remain in Britain, whose life and future is bound up with the future of Britain, the only practical solution is by common action to change the conditions which have brought the present unhappy outcome, and to make Britain truly great, not by empty assertion, but by the achievement of the people, by the transformation of the social system, by the ending of parasitism and the stranglehold of monopoly, and by the fulfilment of a progressive role of Britain in the world. Such is the programme for which all the progressive forces in the labour movement are fighting who, alone have the right to express confidence in the future of Britain.

Drunkard's Progress

Caught red-handed with the damning economic consequences of the Suez aggression, Mr. Macmillan and his colleagues are seeking to appease public anger and anxiety with the familiar drunkard's promises to keep out of the Rampant Lion in future and make substantial cuts henceforth in armaments expenditure. But what, where and how? Here the key questions arise, which involve the whole

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future of British policy. It would not be difficult to make substantial cuts in Britain's armaments expenditure, and fully maintain Britain's independence. But this would require drastic changes in policy unacceptable to Toryism; replacement of the cold war by peaceful co-existence; renunciation of colonial wars; and support for the banning of nuclear tests and weapons in place of the idolisation of nuclear strategy. Hence Toryism has to square the circle in contemplating the economic necessity of cuts. Because Toryism is incapable of representing an independent national policy, Toryism can only consider such cuts as can be permitted within the framework of the American military alliance by the grace and favour of the United States: the reduction of British N.A.T.O. forces in Germany by permission of the United States; or the supply of military weapons and aid from the United States on conditions which mean the increased dependence of Britain and subordination to American strategy.

Kissing the Rod

Smarting and apoplectically furious over the castigation received at the hands of the United States in the Middle East, and over the successive diplomatic rebuffs to every attempt to resume relations during this period, the Tories have pocketed their pride and fulfilled the traditional role of the beaten bully by crawling cap in hand to the American victor. The Sandys Mission to the United States has been proclaimed a triumphant success in the restoration of relations; and even if the premature announcements, blazoned at the time in the British press, of a forthcoming Three-Power Bermuda Conference of Britain, France and the United States, received a prompt official snub and repudiation from President Eisenhower, the promise was subsequently obtained, following the submission of Sandys, that in due course, after the long array of previous potentates, after the visits of Nehru and King Saud, and after M. Mollet, Mr. Macmillan may also be received into the presence, even with the concession of the meeting taking place in Bermuda.

Moses Brings Back the Green Spectacles

What has the Sandys Mission brought back? Before accepting at face value the plaudits of official comment, the British public may be well advised to scrutinise with some care the gross of green spectacles brought back by this modern Moses Primrose, and to consider the price paid for them. Little enough of specific result was set out in the communiqué of February 2 (or in the subsequent

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report to parliament); but this, Mr. Sandys explained, was to be regarded as an iceberg, of which the greater part is hidden. However, the hidden part may not be so mysterious as suggested, and on the whole can be inferred with probability from what has been published. It is clear that Britain explained the unhappy plight of the poor relation to the wealthy uncle; and this was graciously recognised. The proposal to reduce British occupying troops in Germany was presented; but the continued subsequent warning declarations of the American General Norstad in command of the N.A.T.O. forces against the menace of reductions, and subsequent visit to London to confer, would suggest that final agreement on this point was not reached at Washington, but that it was left for further negotiation, with possibly a hard price to be exacted in return. The hard core of the negotiations, however, and the occasion of the jubilant plaudits of the British official press, turned on what the communiqué called 'the possible adoption by Britain of certain American weapons'.

Gearing Britain to the United States

The proposed supply of American weapons or models, as accompanying comment has indicated, is especially in the sphere of long-range guided missiles. In place of Britain continuing the costly research, development and independent production of these, American models would be supplied to Britain. It is possible that a provisional bargain may have been reached along these lines, subject to final negotiation on conditions. Throughout the current period it has been the regular practice of the American military authorities to seek to sell off, or even supply as aid, their no longer wanted stocks of models passing out of date in order to concentrate on the production of new models. Moses may have secured his green spectacles. But two consequent conditions would inevitably follow from this supply. The first consequent condition is that Britain would become strategically dependent on the United States, with its armaments geared to American models, and therefore incapable of an independent policy, so long as this programme was maintained.

Britain as an American Rocket-launching Base

The second consequent condition is even more serious. It would mean—and this would be the essential *quid pro quo* from the American standpoint—that Britain would thereby be established as a key N.A.T.O. launching base for guided missiles. It should not

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be necessary to elaborate on the suicidal consequences of such a role for Britain. Already nine years ago the Attlee-Bevin Government surrendered Britain as an American atom bomber base. Present indications would suggest that the Macmillan Government is proposing to carry this further forward by surrendering Britain as an American rocket-launching base. If this is correct, the Macmillan Government would represent the climax of capitulation to the United States. Its role in the present situation is even more ignominious than that of the Neville Chamberlain Government of the thirties; and the outcome, unless a speedy change of course is effected, could be even more disastrous.

Strategy and Policy

Armaments cannot be separated from strategy, and strategy cannot be separated from policy. The question of the reduction of arms expenditure cannot be separated from major *political* (not merely strategic) decisions. The Macmillan Government is faced with the economic necessity of reducing the crippling burden of arms expenditure. But the Macmillan Government is not prepared to face the fundamental revision of British policy which can alone make this possible. It is attempting to treat the symptom in place of the disease, and thereby only accelerates the advance of the disease. The fundamental questions of policy requiring revision are threefold. First, the aggressive imperialist policy of colonial wars, sectional military pacts for domination in the Middle East or South-East Asia, and maintenance and even extension of a vast array of overseas bases. Second, the cold war policy, expressed in the North Atlantic Treaty, fostering of Nazi rearmament, resistance to Soviet disarmament proposals, bans on East-West trade, and consequent dependence on the United States. Third, the concentration on nuclear strategy and support of nuclear warfare as legitimate—the most deadly form of war for Britain—and stonewall opposition to any proposal to ban nuclear warfare. These three pillars of Britain's present policy not only exclude any substantial reduction of armaments, and condemn Britain to economic deterioration, but hold out the most menacing prospect for the future of Britain.

Extension of Colonial Wars

Has the Macmillan Government learned the lesson of Suez to endeavour to bring to an end the ruinous colonial wars on which Britain is engaged? On the contrary. Since Suez Britain has embarked on a new colonial war against Yemen, no doubt judging

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that here was an antagonist of a more suitable size for Britain's might to encounter, and that the prowess of bombing planes against the daggers and ancient carbines of the Yemeni tribesmen might recall the palmiest days of the old glories of imperial warfare. The horror of Port Said, with the wholesale bombardment and massacre of men, women and children, recalling Guernica, has been followed by the razing of the village of Danaba to the ground as a collective reprisal—a Nazi method condemned as a war crime at Nuremberg. In Cyprus the refusal of negotiations and reinforcement of British armed forces to 18 battalions has brought to this small island the largest concentration of British troops in any colonial dependency. In Ireland additional British troops have been dispatched to the North. In Malaya new dispositions have been announced that, also after the proclamation of independence of the Federation, British armed forces shall continue to operate under British command.

New Overseas Bases

As fast as the revolt of the peoples drives the British armed forces out of one overseas base, the imperialist rulers seek to establish another. Ceylon is engaged in driving the British armed forces out of Trincomalee and Kadunayake, and Jordan out of Akaba. Forthwith comes the announcement of the decision to establish a new R.A.F. base at Gan in the Maldive Islands, a British protectorate since 1887, by agreement with the local Sultan—who had been turned out by his own people in 1953, and a Republic established, but restored after the overthrow of the Republic in 1954. It was explained that the 'political climate' had become so 'unfavourable' and the future so uncertain in most of the countries with established bases, that it had become necessary to set up new bases in territories where popular opposition might be less successful:

> The island chosen has a population of only 500. It is difficult to imagine either extreme nationalism or a scrupulous addiction to neutrality arising seriously in the Maldives. (*The Times*, 4.1.57.)

The haste with which the decision was announced, it was further explained, was in order to circumvent the United Nations, where objection might legitimately be raised:

> Doubtless the Government suspected that as soon as the neutralist pack got wind of a British defence project in the Maldives, it would be off full cry to lodge protests with the United Nations. (*Daily Telegraph*, 4.1.57.)

The exquisite politeness to the hundreds of millions of Afro-Asian peoples who are concerned to keep out of the toils of the imperialist military alliances ('the neutralist pack'), no less than the scrupulous

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respect for the United Nations, will be apparent in this characteristic utterance of imperialist opinion.

Freezing the Cold War

Has the Macmillan Government taken any steps to unfreeze the renewed cold war since Geneva? Once again, on the contrary. It was of course Macmillan who, as Foreign Secretary, played the main part in sabotaging the positive outcome of the Geneva summit conference by directly repudiating the directive of that conference (which had placed European security first, and German reunification only within that framework) at the Foreign Ministers' Conference in the autumn of 1955. The removal of Macmillan as Foreign Secretary was followed by the temporary improvement of relations with the Bulganin-Khrushchev visit to Britain and the arrangement for a return visit of the British Premier to Moscow in the spring of this year. The first act of Macmillan as Premier, at the same time as he was obsequiously angling for an invitation to meet Eisenhower, was to cancel indefinitely the visit to Moscow as incompatible with his other 'preoccupations'.

Reinforcing the Iron Curtain

Alongside this, a series of complaints from istinguished representatives of the Royal Academy and other prominent non-political bodies revealed that the Foreign Office had been busily engaged in vetoing on political grounds cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union, China and other socialist countries, even though the foremost professional and cultural organisations in this country had been desiring such exchanges, and had only been prevented by the orders of the Foreign Office and compelled to put politics before art or science (artists in uniform). The blind folly of the Macmillan-Salisbury line, even from the narrowest standpoint of the interests of British imperialism, is evident. Merely for the aim of pressure on the United States the strongest card in Britain's hand would have been to strengthen relations with the Soviet Union. If Macmillan had gone to Moscow, he might have begun to receive the same deferent attention from President Eisenhower as King Saud. But he preferred the role of the docile mendicant.

Nuclear Madness

The crowning madness of the Macmillan Government's approach to the problem of armaments and Britain's economic situation has been the concentration on nuclear strategy as the key to the future

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and even the supposed path of reduced expenditure. The entire emphasis of the Sandys report to parliament was on nuclear warfare as the warfare of the future, alongside the necessity of maintaining the so-called 'conventional' forces for the minor colonial wars and aggressions. In face of the protests of the Japanese Government, the openly expressed anxiety of the Canadian Premier, and the opposition of the Australian labour movement, the British Government insists on going forward with its hydrogen bomb test on Christmas Island (by what right?), and takes the lead in opposing the Soviet proposal for banning thermonuclear tests, Civil atomic power development in Britain is crippled because the main priority is given to utilising the plutonium produced, not for the extension of atomic power, but for the bomb, with the resultant reduction of atomic power produced by two-thirds.

A Fatal Road

For the future of Britain's economy this path is madness. Its outcome means, not reduction in arms expenditure, but the prospect of an indefinite increase in the total burden, in view of the far greater cost of nuclear weapons, and the further weakening of Britain's economic strength in the new world conditions. For the future existence and survival of Britain the madness is even greater. No country in the world has more reason to press for the banning of nuclear warfare than the vulnerable island of Britain. If the outcome of this path of nuclear warfare should be reached, the guilt of all the post-war Governments of Britain, which, carried away by the initial dreams of atomic superiority and the spurious argument that the Soviet proposals to ban nuclear weapons represented an attempt to deprive the Western powers of their favourite weapons of superiority, will be recalled by the survivors, if any, with curses too late. It is urgent to stop this madness before it is too late.

You Have Been Warned

The early post-war illusions of Western world supremacy on the basis of atomic monopoly have long vanished. The Western powers decreed the death of one hundred thousand men, women and children at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, not to compel the surrender of Japan (Japan was already making approaches for surrender), not to shorten the war, but as the first act of the cold war after the war, as a diplomatic counter for Western supremacy against the Soviet Union. Those illusions are as extinct as the dead of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The warnings sounded today with repeated insistence by

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the Soviet Union are based on facts which the Western experts are no longer prepared to challenge. Under the title 'Perilous Schemes' on January 23, *Pravda* pointed out

> The United States, as is known, does not have a monopoly either in the field of nuclear weapons or, moreover, in the field of guided missiles—one rather should speak of the lag of the United States in the latter field.

The gravest danger, the same article pointed out, was being incurred by those countries, like Turkey, Iran or Japan, which were permitting their territories to become American rocket-launching bases, and which would thereby, in the event of such use, inevitably become exposed to retaliatory action. Britain stands in the first line of such countries. What such retaliatory action would mean for Britain was admitted by Sandys in his speech, at the same time as he admitted that Britain had no defence to prevent its own destruction in the event of nuclear war. Yet the British Government, obedient to the United States, and supported in this respect by the official Labour Party, votes down every Soviet resolution for banning nuclear weapons. 'Whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad.'

Why Should Labour Say Ditto?

Never was there such an opportunity for British Labour to rally the support of the majority of the people against the Tory Government's policy of inflated armaments for overseas aggression and nuclear war. Instead, behind all the shadow boxing of the defence debate, the old identity of policy was revealed, not only behind the colonial wars and overseas commitments, but behind the strategy of nuclear war and concentration on guided missiles. For popular consumption Mr. George Brown, who moved the amendment in parliament, might try to offer a picture of opposition to nuclear war:

> There's only one sure defence against the horrors of H-bomb warfare. That is to outlaw and get rid of the whole wretched business. That is and always has been Labour's policy. . . . But if others won't play, then some other policy in the end prevails.
>
> (George Brown, 'My Policy for Defence', *Forward*, 8.2.57.)

Who are the 'others'? The simple reader might imagine from this that Labour and the Soviet Union have been united in a stubborn battle to ban nuclear weapons, and have only been prevented by the United States and the Tories ('Others'). It would be difficult for the simple reader to realise from this that the Labour and Tory Governments since the war have equally voted against, and Labour in opposition has supported the Tory Government in voting against

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every successive Soviet proposal, year by year, to ban nuclear weapons. But when it came to the official Labour resolution in parliament, moved by Mr. Brown in the defence debate, the imaginary fight against nuclear warfare disappeared.

Battle for Policy

In the official Labour resolution in the defence debate, as in the main Front Bench speeches, no hint of opposition was offered to the policy of Toryism expressed in the arms programme, that is, the imperialist policy of colonial wars, the cold war and nuclear warfare. The entire concentration was only on the technical questions of greater 'efficiency' in carrying out the identical policy.

> This House regrets that, in spite of the expenditure since 1951 of more than £7,500 million, recent events have emphasised the wasteful and inefficient character of the present defence arrangements, and accordingly calls upon the Government to present forthwith a revised defence plan which will ensure greater efficiency and lead to both a substantial cut in expenditure and the abolition of national service.

'Wasteful'. 'Ineffective'. 'Greater efficiency'. The only point of difference was made on the method of reorganising the present system of military service, as between the Tory plan for selective service and the Labour plan for a four-year replacement of national service by a greatly increased recruitment of long-term regulars to carry out the same policy of colonial wars and overseas commitments. But on the decisive questions of policy behind the armaments identity of views was expressed. No challenge was offered to the colonial wars and military pacts. No challenge was offered to the strategy of nuclear warfare. No challenge was offered to the importation of American guided missiles and the handing over of Britain as an American rocket-launching base. But it is precisely on these basic issues of policy governing armaments, and profoundly affecting the economic situation at home, that the real fight of the labour movement needs to be conducted. If this fight on policy is not conducted, not only is the cause of peace abandoned, but all the talk of a 'substantial cut' in arms expenditure is beating the air.

Unity Against the War Danger—Unity Against the Tory Government

The grave increase of international tension and of new dangers of war in many regions of the world is manifest to all observers. The joint statement of the Soviet and Czech Governments on January 29 called attention to the fact that the revival of German militarism under Hitler's old generals in Western Germany 'now creates a situa-

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tion in Europe resembling in many ways the situation preceding the second world war'. That is a serious statement to make and is not lightly made. The course can still be turned. The ceaseless daily new diplomatic initiatives of the Soviet Union for peace, on a scale unparalleled since the second world war, for peaceful coexistence, for a meeting of the Powers, for a disarmament meeting at ministerial level, the Notes to Adenauer, to the British, French and American Governments, to the members of the Disarmament Committee, the proposals on the Middle East—all reflect a response to the gravity of the situation and a supreme effort to save the world for peace. But the crucial fight needs to be fought above all here in Britain. If we turn the scales in Britain, we turn the scales in the world. Whatever the differences existing among socialists and communists and other labour supporters and all progressive sections on particular questions, unity is possible and necessary and urgent on the great issues confronting all of us. Unity against the war danger. Unity against the disastrous anti-social policies of the reactionary Macmillan Government. Unity for a positive alternative policy for peace and the needs of the people. Lewisham has shown the decline of Tory support. What has still to be achieved, and what Lewisham was not yet able to show, is increased support for the labour movement on the basis of a policy which can inspire the people.

February 18, 1957. R.P.D.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

SHANGHAI IN THE OLD DAYS

When on the first day I went to work, both my hands and feet became numb. Although they were numb, I had to work. For ten hours we were oxen and horses for the benefit of the capitalists. We have been exploited to the utmost by them. My monthly wage is twelve dollars. Rain and strong wind, no difference to us. In the hottest summer months we sweat before the hottest furnaces. The life in the factory is the life of a prisoner and even worse. We are prisoners because our fate hangs with us only in the factories. Our fathers, mothers, sisters, wives and brothers, all are exploited by the capitalists. All are working under the heavy rain, facing the strong wind and sweating before the hottest furnaces. We are not human beings and have been robbed of everything we have. But now we cannot live such a life. We must rise up. We cannot bear any more.

From *A Chinese Worker's Letter*, March, 1932.

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THE CLASH IN ENGINEERING

T. GRAHAM*

WHERE throughout the world is the largest confrontation of capital and labour in wage negotiations? It is in Britain, in its engineering industry, with a man-power of three millions, over-topping other staple trades. While others like mining and textiles have been shrinking, engineering has expanded. In these last ten years with some two score unions banded together in confederation, these wage negotiations are on a gigantic scale, affecting the livelihood of nearly one-fifth of Britain's population. In such a clash of Titans the rest of the population cannot remain unconcerned.

On Thursday, October 25, 1956, the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, in line with the decision taken at its Annual Conference in August, 1956, submitted to the Engineering and Allied Employers' National Federation, a 'claim for a substantial increase in wages to be granted to male manual workers employed in the Engineering Industry'. In submitting the claim, Mr. W. J. Carron, President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and spokesman for the Confederation, defined the term 'substantial increase' as being 'a 10 per cent. increase'.

The claim in some respects followed the pattern of preceding claims, but it was shadowed by what might be regarded by many as rather ominous and significant factors. In June, 1956, before the Confederation had even taken the decision that a claim should be submitted, an Employers' spokesman declared that if a wage claim was submitted in 1956 it would be rejected. It is not new for employers to reject wage claims, but it is something of a novelty for claims to be anticipated and rejected before they are even made. This must give some cause to doubt the sincerity of employers who, on the surface at least, subscribe to the theory that wage claims should be subject matter for negotiation. There has been an outside source of inspiration which partly accounts for the employers' attitude.

At Newcastle in May, 1956, the Prime Minister (then Chancellor of the Exchequer) stated that another round of wage increases such as we had had in 1955 would be disastrous. In the same month another Government spokesman (the 'well-connected' John Hare, then Minister of State for the Colonies), when commenting on the Chancellor's speech, made the following statement:

*Mr. Graham, as many of our readers will know, is Assistant Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers.

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> As his policy unfolds, I think you will find that the strongest possible Government support will be given to arrest any further increase in wages unless the rise is coupled with increased productivity. At the same time I am quite sure the Chancellor will wish to increase the incentive of those who earn salaries in what is called the surtax range.

In other words, this means a wage freeze and reduced standards for the worker and increased incomes for the surtax payer. If any doubt exists in regard to this intention it might be dispelled by the statement made last September by Brigadier Redmayne, who as deputy Chief Whip was in a good position to know and to utter:

> The trade unions are too late because the position of employers has changed as the result of deliberate Government policies. The trade unions will find one thing—the atmosphere of negotiations when they come to meet the employers will be very different from what it has been during the years since the war.

The Engineering Employers have not, at any time, been a body with whom negotiations were easy; on the contrary, they are probably the strongest and best organised section of the employers in this country, and it would appear they are now being incited to get tougher still in the attempt to make the workers carry the burden of the disastrous effect of deliberate Government policy. Moreover a fresh turn of the screw seems to have been applied in January by the translation of the employers' president to the House of Lords, to become Minister of Power in a cabinet that is already being called 'the Percy Mills Circus'.

The Confederation claim is based on three factors: (1) Because it considers that the rates of wages, both skilled and unskilled, in the industry are still too low to provide a reasonable standard of life; (2) Because the cost of living is still going up; (3) Because the industry generally, despite the difficulties being experienced by firms in the motor trade, is still highly prosperous. Profits are running at a very high level and are still rising. Except in the motor trade, order books are full and future prospects are generally considered bright.

Whether standard rates, or earnings, should be the measuring rod has always been a bone of contention between workers and employers. The former claim that the basis should be standard rates, whilst the employers reject this view and claim that earnings are the criterion. The Court of Enquiry held in 1954 agreed with the trade union point of view. The standard rate of the engineering fitter is at present £8 8s. 4d. per 44 hours. It is on this figure that holiday payments and overtime premiums are based, no matter what average earnings may be. In April, 1946, the fitter's rate was £5 2s. 0d. The present rate therefore represents an increase of about 65 per cent.

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over 1946, whilst in the same period retail prices as a whole have increased by 70 per cent. and food prices alone by 100 per cent. (Index of the London and Cambridge Economic Service).

Earnings which, of course, include piecework rates, bonuses and overtime payments are considerably higher: but these are the product of extra effort, special skills or the sacrifice of the worker's leisure time. Moreover, not all the workers have the opportunity of working the overtime necessary to increase earnings. A special enquiry carried out by the employers indicated that in one particular week more than one-third of the fitters included in the survey did not work any overtime. A survey carried out by the Ministry of Labour in the same period showed that in the engineering and electrical goods industry only about 462,000 out of a total of 1,223,000 were working overtime. This bears out the contention of the Confederation that although overtime payments have the effect of inflating average earnings, the majority of workers in the industry are working little or no overtime. At best overtime is a mixed blessing and it is usually the prerogative of the employer whether or not it is necessary. That being so it is not uncommon to find that in a situation such as exists at present in some industries, overtime has faded out and the worker earning average or above average earnings yesterday, is today well below average and getting near to the standard rate. Having this in mind the reluctance to accept this exceedingly variable factor of average earnings when discussing wage claims can be understood.

The circumstances of a curtailed working week, short time working and redundancy in some sections of light engineering, as in other sections of the consumer goods industry, can be largely attributed to the Government's policy of credit squeeze and the after-effects of Suez. In consequence of the substantial reduction in purchasing power many of the workers affected are experiencing real difficulty and in time this must considerably reduce the demand for certain ranges of consumer goods. Moreover, workers in general have become accustomed to a standard of living which cannot be maintained in circumstances of under-employment or inadequate wages.

The situation in general in engineering, despite the present difficulties in some sections, is that of a highly prosperous industry. Profits continue to rise and order books are full. In 1956 the gross profits of 419 Engineering, Shipbuilding, Electrical and Radio Companies reporting in the first nine months, were £343,985,000 as compared with £298,919,000 in the corresponding period of 1955, which represents an increase of 15 per cent. Ordinary dividends paid by 382 companies in engineering in 1955 were 24·8 per cent. higher

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than in 1954; and the companies reporting in the first nine months of 1956 showed an increase in ordinary dividends paid of 11·66 per cent. over the corresponding period in 1955. This trend of increased dividends year after year is clearly illustrated in the trend of profits figures published in the *Financial Times* in relation to the amounts paid in ordinary dividends by all companies in the engineering, electrical, radio, motor and aircraft industries whose annual accounts have been analysed:

Year	*Increase over previous year* %
1951	14·8
1952	13·8
1953	14·5
1954	28·1

From these figures it is calculated that the average amount paid in dividend is now two and three-quarter times that in 1950. These are the figures of a highly prosperous industry and one well able to pay the modest 10 per cent. demanded in the claim.

The claim has not yet been resolved, and further approaches are to be made by Confederation representatives to the employers. The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions is in no mood to accept the viewpoint of the employers, expressed in conference on November 29, 1956—that the claim should be rejected outright. The position has been aggravated since the claim was first submitted on October 25, 1956, and will deteriorate further if legislation is passed to transfer millions of pounds from the pocket of the worker to the pocket of the landlord. Since negotiations are continuing, no positive decision is yet taken by the Confederation as to future action.

Proposals made include: a complete stoppage of work for 48 hours; a ban on all overtime and piecework; a complete stoppage in selected prosperous key firms: while others are of the opinion that a general stoppage of work is called for. Whatever action the Confederation decides to take in order to obtain a satisfactory conclusion, there must be complete unity. As demonstrated on December 2, 1953, the Confederation has the organisation to obtain this and can command the loyalty of its constituents at all levels.

The situation will be reviewed in the light of events (some development may have taken place since this article was written) but should the outcome be that action must be taken, the responsibility must rest on the shoulders of the employers who, inspired by the Government and supported by some irresponsible sections of the press, have arrogantly refused to meet a legitimate and just claim.

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WORKERS' COUNCILS

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

[*Much interest in workers' councils has been aroused by recent events in Europe. The experiences of the past, especially in the period of 1917 to 1921, of Councils of Workers' Deputies (Soviets), Works' Councils, Works' Committees, Workers' Control Commissions and Councils of Action are therefore of particular value to recall today. Just over half a century ago, in the course of the 1905 Revolution in Russia, a new form of working class organisation appeared—the Soviet or Council of Workers' Deputies (or as we should say here, Delegates)—a name now known throughout the world. In the second great revolutionary year of the twentieth century in Russia—1917—another representative body of the workers played an historic part: the Works or Factory Committee. Similar bodies were formed during or after the first world war in other countries. This article surveys in the most brief summary, the experience of Workers' Councils. A further article will deal with Works' Committees and Works' Councils as well as with British experiences and recent happenings in Hungary.*—ED., L.M.]

Soviets in Russia

SOVIETS (Councils of Workers' Deputies) appeared in 1905 as strike committees, composed of delegates elected in the factories—at first to run local strikes (e.g., the metal workers at Lugansk, in February and the textile workers at Ivanovo in May) and then as a general strike organisation (in October, 1905, when an all-Russian general strike began). Inevitably they began to assume political functions, and where the Bolsheviks had a decisive influence they went on to insurrection (at Moscow in December, 1905, and elsewhere). They disbanded or were suppressed when the counter-revolution began in 1906. About eighty such soviets were formed. In March, 1917, they reappeared, many hundreds this time, directly the Tsar's power was overthrown—in Petrograd on March 12, in other cities later. They were primarily composed of delegates from factories, elected at factory meetings of the workers: with a very small number of representatives of the unions in the trades where there were no factories, and usually a few representatives of socialist parties. As Russia was at war, there were garrisons in most towns, and as a rule the soldiers and sailors elected delegates

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to the soviets too. Thus the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' (or Sailors') Deputies were all-inclusive representative bodies of the working class of their locality, elected not self-appointed, and organising the working class to fight the capitalist class. Defeated in 1905, victorious after eight months' struggle in 1917, they became the workers' organs of political power in the Soviet Republic set up on November 7 that year. The Bolshevik Party was in favour of their taking power from April, 1917, onwards; but at that time it was in a small minority within the soviets. Only as it gradually won a majority in them from September, 1917, onwards, did the soviets approach, and finally reach, the decision to take over power.

Workers' and Soldiers' Councils in Germany

Workers' Councils were formed in many towns of north Germany in November, 1918, after the crushing defeat of the Kaiser's army in the first world war. The sailors at Hamburg and Kiel revolted, supported by the dockyard workers: and they were followed by the workers and many garrisons all over Germany. From the beginning, however, the councils were dominated by the Majority (right wing) leaders of the Social-Democratic Party, which since 1869 had been the one workers' party in Germany until 1917. In April that year, a centre group of leaders broke away to form an 'Independent Social-Democratic Party', and a small revolutionary Marxist minority, led by Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht, formed itself into an underground 'Spartacus' organisation during the war: but neither had won a decisive foothold among the workers even in Berlin, Hamburg or the Ruhr, where they were strongest. In many places the workers' councils were formed as joint committees of the two Social-Democratic Parties or even of the three parties, without factory representation. At the first all-German Congress of the Councils (December 16-21, 1918) the right-wing Social-Democrats were in a crushing majority (373 out of 485). Resolutions were passed refusing to take power and endorsing the government which had been formed several weeks earlier by the leaders of the Majority and Independent S.D.P.s, with the secret agreement of the reactionary army leaders, who still controlled considerable forces which had not rebelled in November. By 400 to 70 the Congress agreed that a Constituent Assembly be convened on ordinary parliamentary lines. The government then deliberately provoked a general strike in Berlin, which the Spartacists (by then the Communist Party) prematurely turned into an insurrection. Thousands of workers and the Spartacist leaders were massacred by the government's forces.

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White terror was raging when the Constituent Assembly was elected, and the capitalist parties won nearly 60 per cent of the seats. Thus capitalism was preserved in Germany. The Councils of Workers' Deputies, on the other hand, began to fade out, and after a second congress (April 8-14, 1919) disappeared altogether.*

Thus the Workers' Councils, formed at a moment of revolutionary upheaval, disappeared soon after it became clear that, dominated by the Social-Democrats, they would not fight for the transference of political power to the workers, while the young and weak Communist Party was defeated in its insurrection too soon to alter the balance.

Workers' Councils in Hungary, 1919

A workers' council and a soldiers' council, elected by workers in the factories and in the garrison units, were formed in Budapest during the general strike of October, 1918, which finished off the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, after the total defeat of its armies. These councils were dominated by the Social-Democrats (there was no Communist Party), whose leaders dreaded 'Bolshevism'. The councils at this stage were little more than committees of the Social-Democratic Party: and they took no action when monarchist units began 'restoring order', disarming the workers and shooting peasants who were seizing the land. The councils faded out, and the Liberal government of Karolyi was formed. But on March 21, 1919, this government collapsed owing to growing economic and political difficulties, and the Social-Democratic leaders sought out the leaders of the Communist Party in prison (the party had been formed in December, 1918), and signed an agreement to amalgamate their organisations and to set up a Soviet Republic. During the existence of the latter (March 21-August 1) Soviets were elected in Budapest and other towns—but not in the factories. Election Commissions were set up, composed of Social-Democrats and Communists on a proportional basis—which gave the former a large majority—and drew up lists of candidates for each district of Budapest. The workers voted at local polling booths, for or against the list. While important work was done by the Soviets elected in this way, they were constantly involved in struggles between the Social-Democrats and Communists, which continued in other spheres of public life

*There were two main exceptions to this picture: in Bremen where a Workers' and Sailors' Council held power from January 10 to February 3 before being suppressed by force; and in Bavaria where a Soviet republic set up on April 13, 1919, attempted to introduce workers' control in the factories, to nationalise the banks, etc.; but it relied on Soviets which included delegates of merchants, traders, intellectuals, as well as from factories and the soldiers. It was crushed by the armed forces of the German Government on May 1, 1919.

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too. As regards the Soviets elected in provincial towns and country districts—where previously even the Social-Democrats had been extremely weak—it is significant that at the first (and only) Congress of Soviets held in June, 1919, many of the speeches by provincial representatives were so anti-Communist and anti-Semitic in character that the minutes were never published. The Soviets disappeared on the fall of the Soviet Government, overthrown by the reactionary armies of Rumania and Czechoslovakia, under Allied direction.

Thus in Hungary the Soviets, imperfectly reflecting the opinions of the factory workers by their method of election, in fact echoed the workers' support in the main of the old Social-Democratic leaders, who were far more skilled in manœuvre than the less experienced Communists and by their intrigues with agents of the Allies, bore a heavy responsibility for the overthrow of the Soviet Republic.

Soviets in Poland, 1918-19

That part of Poland which was held by the Russian Empire up to 1915 was completely occupied by the Germans during the first world war. Hundreds of thousands of workers in its main industries had been evacuated to Russia before the German advance (1915-16), and about half a million were deported for work in Germany afterwards. Nevertheless, when the Germans began to withdraw in November, 1918, and German army units elected Soldiers' Councils, the workers elected Councils of Workers' Deputies in Warsaw and other large towns, while Councils of Peasants' and Labourers' Deputies were elected in a few country districts. At this time the Polish State was being set up, and the workers were largely influenced by the nationalist Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.)—the more because the old and influential Marxist organisation, the Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania, had been much worse hit than the P.P.S. by the mass migration of industrial workers. As a result the Soviets were largely dominated from the first by the P.P.S.—whose right-wing leaders at the same time helped to set up the bourgeois government (November 14) and to establish as president, the nationalist Pilsudski.

In December, 1918, the Social-Democrats joined with the left-wing of the P.P.S. to form the Communist Party, which fought within the Soviets for a militant policy (introduction of the 8-hour day in factories, nationalisation of industry, friendship with Soviet Russia, etc.); but it was too late. The government that month began to suppress the Soviets at Sosnowice, Zamosce, the Dombrowa coal-field and elsewhere, while the Communist Party as such was driven

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underground in February, 1919. As late as March the Warsaw Soviet was divided—P.P.S. 333, Communist supporters 297—but by the summer of that year the last Soviets had been dissolved.

Thus in Poland the Soviets disappeared within little more than six months because the workers largely followed a party which opposed the idea of the rule of the working class, while the Communists had not yet recovered from the serious weakening of Marxist elements through the disasters of the war.

Workers' Councils in Austria, 1918-1920

In Austria, too, like Hungary and Germany, the Social-Democratic Party was the traditional party of the working class up to the first world war. Its members controlled the Councils of Workers' Deputies and Councils of Soldiers' Deputies which were formed when the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed in October, 1918. The rank and file Social-Democrats set about using the Councils to control prices, inspect production and even, in some parts, to form Red Guards or 'People's Militia'. Their leaders, however, formed a coalition with the capitalist parties (Renner, a Social-Democrat, headed the new government) and helped it to break strikes and to set up a 'People's Army' as a counter-poise to the armed workers' detachments. They rapidly re-established authority over their members, successfully opposed a suggestion that the Vienna Workers' Council should appoint 'controllers' to government offices (on the ground that the working class ought not to dictate to the rest of the community) and gradually reduced the Workers' Councils generally to impotence.

The Communist Party, formed after November, 1918, was extremely weak (there was no real left wing in the Austrian Social-Democratic Party before 1914), and its first mass propaganda was among the unemployed, war cripples and returned prisoners of war. These were very responsive, but had little weight in the Workers' Councils. Great mass demonstrations of these war victims in April, 1919, initiated by the Communists, overcame police resistance and were in control of Vienna at one moment. But the inexperienced Communists were persuaded by a glib-tongued Social-Democratic leader, Fritz Adler, not to proclaim a Soviet Republic, and the danger to the capitalist regime passed. By the late summer of 1919, the Communists controlled 30 out of 150 Soldiers' Councils, and in elections to the Vienna Central Workers' Council that autumn the Communists for the first time won a substantial number of seats. But they remained a minority. Although these Councils continued

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in existence until 1921—longer than in any other country outside Soviet Russia—they played no significant part after 1920. Over and over again the Social-Democratic leaders 'warned' the workers during these crucial years against Allied blockade and famine 'if they went too far'.

Thus the Austrian Workers' Councils, formed at a moment of general political and economic crisis when the Social-Democratic rank and file had escaped to some extent from under their leaders' control, began to wither away when that control was re-established.

'Soviets without Communists'

On several occasions in the history of the Russian revolution after political power had been taken by the Soviets in November, 1917, attempts were made to eliminate Communists from them.

In northern Russia the workers for various reasons were mostly under Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary influence in a number of industrial establishments. The leaders of the Murmansk regional Soviet, nominally Communists, broke away from their allegiance in June, 1918, and within a week signed an agreement with the commanders of the British, French and American forces in the port which was the beginning of Allied intervention in north Russia. Before long a military dictatorship of Tsarist officers was established, under allied control, and lasted nearly two years.

In the Urals, where there were big works isolated in country districts, the most class-conscious workers enlisted in the Red Army: Most Soviets were under Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary influence, and in some places revolted against the Soviet government in May and June, 1918. Aided by units of deluded Czechoslovak ex-prisoners of war, within two months Kolchak's White Army, formed in Siberia, had occupied the Urals, which it held for nearly eighteen months, maintaining capitalism by White Terror.

At Baku the Bolsheviks won a majority in the Soviet in December, 1917, and established Soviet power in March, 1918. They took no effective measures, however, to deal with the counter-revolutionary parties—Mensheviks and Tartar and Armenian nationalists—who played on dissensions among the medley of nationalities there. When the British invaded the region from north Persia, in July, 1918, a section of the Deputies yielded to counter-revolutionary propaganda, the Bolsheviks were left in a minority and had to resign from the local Soviet government, and their party was suppressed. A few days later the British forces occupied the city, the twenty-six

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Bolshevik leaders were shot with British connivance, and for the next two years Baku was under capitalist rule, maintained by terror.

This was at the beginning of the Civil War. The most famous example came at its end. Russia was economically ruined and starving, the workers exhausted, the peasants unwilling to put up any longer with wartime difficulties, millions of ex-soldiers looking for jobs. At the naval base of Kronstadt the sailors were no longer the 1917 generation, which was scattered far and wide in Civil War graves or organising Soviet power: levies of inexperienced and immature young peasants had taken their place. Ex-slum dwellers, petty craftsmen, ex-traders and other nondescript elements of a great city had thronged into the workshops from which the older factory workers had also largely gone to fight in the Red Army: factory workers had better rations during the Civil War. Thus illegal Menshevik and Anarchist groups got their chance.

When economic difficulties and food shortages were at their height in nearby Petrograd, the Soviet leaders at Kronstadt rose in revolt (February 28, 1921) demanding (i) 'free elections' and 'freedom of speech and press for Anarchist and Left Socialist parties'—who had helped the Whites all through the Civil War (ii) freedom of 'political prisoners, members of socialist parties'—in jail for disruptive activity (iii) free trade in foodstuffs by the peasants and equalisation of rations (iv) freedom for the peasants to sell or rent land. Granting these demands would have completely undermined the system of socialist workers dictatorship set up in November, 1917. Indeed, within a few days the leaders were denouncing the Communist Party and all its policies as 'bloody tyrants', 'usurpers', etc. Moreover, the rebels were hailed enthusiastically throughout the capitalist world, collections began on their behalf and leading counter-revolutionaries hurried to Finland nearby to 'be on the spot.'

The Red Army suppressed the rising. As Lenin pointed out, the purpose of the rebel leaders was ostensibly not to overthrow the Soviets: they only wanted 'Soviets without Communists' with the political leadership, that is, shifted just a little to the right or left. This slogan enabled them to delude and misguide the 14,000 discontented workers and sailors. But the White leader, Milyukov, in Paris, wrote frankly that the programme didn't matter: providing the Bolshevik government was defeated, the rest would follow.

Lessons of this Experience

At the Second Congress of the Communist International (July-August, 1920) a summing up was made of the experience of forming

(*Continued on page* 122)

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CHINESE POETRY

CHINESE poetry, of which a good deal has been translated into English, has its own special features. In the first place, being written in ideograms, with each character representing not a letter but a word and the idea behind a word, it is relatively unaffected by lapse of time: poems of three thousand years ago can still be read and enjoyed. Secondly this continuity makes for traditional styles as well as frequent allusions to days and battles long ago. Thus there is the seven-character ancient style, (classical metres and tone-patterns) in which Mao Tse-tung wrote his famous poem on 'The Long March'. Then about twelve hundred years ago came the Tzu style, with very definite forms of five or seven (or even more) characters in each line; in which the poems on the next two pages are written. Now new styles have grown up, based on folk songs or influenced by European verse: and there is debate on the merits today of ancient and modern.

In a letter to the new *Poetry Magazine*, whose first issue appeared in Peking a month ago, Chairman Mao writes that he encloses his poems at their request but that he does not think it wise for young modern poets to follow the ancient style which is hard, and confining for the thought, even though he himself has done so. Of the eighteen poems printed in the magazine, six were translated some time ago by the New Zealand poet and fighter for peace, Rewi Alley, who has now translated the others specially for *Labour Monthly*. Rewi Alley writes us that in the first line of 'Swimming', with its many images, there is 'a classical reference to Chia I of old who first drank water from Changsha and then did great things. I do not know if Mao himself swam across, but it is said that he is a good long distance swimmer': and (in the second half of this same poem) that 'In translating I have made "turtles and snakes" into monsters of the deep, denizens of the deep. It is clear that Mao often thinks of them as the old war-lords'. Besides, the great new bridge over the Yang-tze-kiang will run from Turtle Hill near Hanyang to Snake Hill in Wuchang. Wushan (in the third last line) is a mountain in the Yang-tze gorges.

The second poem 'At Changsha' (capital of Hunan province in which Chairman Mao was born at Hsiang T'an in 1893) refers also to the Hsiang river, a Hunan tributary of the Yang-tze.

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NEW POEMS *by Mao Tse-tung*

Translated by Rewi Alley

SWIMMING

Having drunk the waters of Changsha
and eaten the fish of Wuchang, then
looking up the great length of the Yangtze
I feel that I would swim over from bank
to bank, and in swimming I lift my head
look into the distance, careless of waves
as much at ease as if walking (in my own courtyard);
happy today, thinking how said
Confucius as he stood by the waters
'all of the past
is like the waters of a river
sweeping down and away'.

the wind makes boat masts bend
but now river monsters below are quiet
and we can plan a great work;
building a bridge from North to South
once separated by what men said
was a barrier made by nature; hereafter
both banks will be joined as one
and away in the West shall rise
a stone wall that will cut off the storms
coming down from the gorges above; and there
will be a lake calm and quiet, where now
the rapids flow; then if the spirits of Wushan
feel well enough, may they emerge
and view a world in change.

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AT CHANGSHA

A cold Autumn day, and standing alone
watching the waters of the Hsiang River
flowing North, beside the place they call
Chiu-tse-chou, seeing the serried hills
and the forests on their sides
turning crimson in the sunset; then looking
down on the great wide river in its
translucent green; so many boats
as though racing, gliding swiftly past;
above, wings of eagles beat against
the sky; below fish dart through
the waters; all manner of beings
in this late season, moving, competing
and I gaze up at the heavens
then demand the earth on which I stand
what is it that decides on whom
fortune, good or bad, shall rest?

and once in past days I came here
with many friends to play; nostalgic,
I think back on the happiness
of that moment; but then we were young
high spirited, students filled
with the urgency of our times; arguing
this way, then that; pointing
from one thing to the other; writing
and telling each other how the things
once considered so great, were now
of but small account; and then
do you remember the time when once
we sat in a boat speeding lightly,
and in the middle of the river
rose a great wave that would engulf us
then how well we rowed right through it
to safety.

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Soviets—not only in view of what had happened in Russia, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Austria, but also because of attempts in some Western countries to create Soviets artificially. The resolution adopted well repays study.

It described the 1905 Soviets, showing how they disappeared once counter-revolution triumphed. It spoke of a little-known warning by the Bolsheviks in 1916, not to try and form Soviets when there was no struggle of the workers for power. It dwelt on the successive phases of the life of the 1917 Soviets which ended in the Bolsheviks winning a majority in the Soviets which then became ripe to take over political power. It traced the same process in the German and Austrian revolutions of 1918-19—with a different and more sombre ending, because the opportunist parties had greater authority with the workers and helped the capitalist class first to strengthen its weakened power and then completely to regain it.

Taking into account the other experiences described above, one could sum up as follows the lessons they taught:

i. Workers' Councils are only effective when organising the mass of the workers of their locality in the cause of struggle against the political power of the capitalist class.

ii. They may be constituted in different ways, but the closer they come to direct representation from the factories, the more effective they are.

iii. While they may come into existence on an economic issue on which the workers are fighting the capitalists, the more important the issue and the bigger the crisis facing the capitalists, the more quickly the Workers' Councils find themselves fighting a political battle for the workers against the capitalists.

iv. The relationship of political forces within the working class movement, and the temper of the mass of the workers, may be such as to put the Workers' Councils, nationally or locally, under the control of right wing opportunist (reformist) leaders, who have been forced to agree to the movement for a time because they fear to oppose it. But their political programme being what it is—co-operation with the capitalist class, in the hope of 'humanising' it—they betray the movement as soon as a favourabe opportunity arises.

v. The only certain way to ensure the victory of the principle for which the Workers' Councils are fighting—and therefore of putting them in power—is to ensure that they are led by a workers' political party the aim of which, above all, is *to make the working class the ruling class of society.*

These conclusions stand even if circumstances make possible a different way to workers' power.

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THE NEW NIHILISTS

JOHN BERGER

CANDOUR is a quality rarely found in political testaments today. And consequently Kingsley Amis' recent Fabian pamphlet *Socialism and the Intellectuals* would be worth reading in this respect alone, even if there were nothing else to recommend it. In fact this thirteen-page essay is also the work of an intelligent writer, and significant for another reason as well: it is an index to the political thought of a new generation of intellectuals—roughly speaking those who have matured since the war.

Obviously the political attitude described by Amis in his pamphlet is not that of the average worker of the same generation: equally obviously it is not that of the average middle class careerist whose future success depends upon his not thinking at all. Amis says that by 'intellectuals' he means 'teachers, perhaps the lower ranks of the civil service, journalists, industrial scientists, librarians, G.P.s, some of the clergy, and the various bands of literary and artistic or arty intellectuals'. Later I shall have something to say about this classification because I think it is a mistaken one, but the point at the moment is that Amis claims to speak for a fair number of people, and although few of them would agree with all his points, and although there are naturally exceptions even within his category and generation, his general attitude *is*, I think, typical enough to justify his claim. A number of recent books and plays, the ideas going round universities, the average age of the membership of the political parties in this country, all point in roughly the same direction. The title of Angry Young Men which has been given to this generation should not be taken too seriously. Indeed, if I had to use one adjective to describe this essay, it would be *modest*, not *angry*.

What are Amis' main *observations*, for his work is a survey rather than an argument? He says:

1. That most of the intellectuals of his generation are not prepared to be politically active; which, if they are artists or teachers of any sort, also means that they are not prepared to be politically 'committed' in their work. The most they may do is to vote.

2. That the reasons for this political apathy are (*a*) that their own interests are not much involved in any of the political fights that take place. (*b*) That the 1950s unlike the 1930s, do not present urgent issues, such as mass-unemployment or the civil war in Spain, in which it is easily possible to become 'romantically' involved. And what Amis means by

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political romanticism is 'the irrational capacity to become inflamed by interests and causes that are not one's own'. He concludes,

3. That none of this matters a great deal because he does not believe that the intellectual, as such, has anything 'to give the Labour movement'.

Now, most readers of *Labour Monthly* would be capable of turning each of these points upside down. One can argue—and reasonably—that non-commitment is in itself a political attitude which because of his civil obedience, in fact commits the person involved to support of the *status quo*: that issues such as the Cold War, then banning of atomic weapons, and German rearmament (none of them mentioned in this pamphlet), do finally involve the personal interests, even to the point of life and death, of everyone in this country: that is, if it is always 'irrational' to become involved in causes that are not immediately one's own, then the 'Intellectual' is a meaningless term, for the intellectual is nothing if he is not a man who pursues the truth—and the pursuit of truth always finally leads back to action—disinterestedly: that if the intellectual has so little to give the labour movement, why was it—to take only one example—that the Fascist prosecutor at the trial of Gramsci, who was one of the greatest intellectuals of this century, called on the tribunal to 'stop that brain working for the next twenty years'.

To argue like this, and then leave it at that, does not, however, take us to the heart of the problem that Amis raises. Amis is not a fool, and in many of his subsidiary remarks in this essay he displays an intelligence that could enable him to answer his own arguments just as well as we can: nor is he an irresponsible go-getter. Perhaps the most significant sentence in the whole pamphlet is the last one. 'How agreeable it must be to have a respectable motive for being politically active.' And by respectable I think he means honest. His remark might be linked with a line spoken by the hero in John Osborne's famous play *Look Back in Anger*: 'Oh, brother, it's such a long time since I was with anyone who got enthusiastic about anything'. Or, later in the same play, another line: 'I suppose people of our generation aren't able to die for good causes any longer. . . . There aren't any good brave causes left. If the big bang does come and we all get killed off, it won't be in aid of the old fashioned grand design. It'll just be for the Brave-New-nothing-very-much-thank-you'. The heart of the problem is disillusionment, but not in the tired middle-aged sense of the word; it is a question of there apparently being nothing offered that can inspire the young. Amis talks of the intellectual going round 'shopping' for inspiration and finding none.

This suggests that the failure (I take it as axiomatic that it is a

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failure) can't just be laid at the door of the generation we are discussing. We must look for some of the causes of the new disillusionment in recent history. Actually Amis gives us a clue about this. He says, 'the Welfare State is notoriously unpopular with intellectuals'. But what exactly is meant by the Welfare State in this context? Does it simply mean that the whole present set-up is unpopular with intellectuals? Hardly, because then they would be militantly trying to change it one way or another. Does it mean that specific innovations such as the Health Service are unpopular? In themselves surely not. What I think is unpopular is the idea of the Welfare State as a kind of Reform State—with all the institutional bureaucratic associations that can be packed into the word. A few arch-reactionaries see this reformist idea as a concession to the 'mob-mentality'—amongst them it may be Colin Wilson; the majority, including Amis, see it as a necessary, just, but totally uninspiring social obligation, comparable, though on a wider scale, to the upkeep of the roads. All of them, however, mistakenly believe that it is connected with Socialism. They believe that the fervent hopes of 1945 were naïve and over-simplified because in practice they didn't lead to what was expected. They do not see that these hopes were betrayed. This confusion leads them to a double disillusion: about British Socialism as a dynamic idea in itself: and about the possibility of fundamentally changing society, of the man-eating hypocrisies of which many of them are aware. After all, if you can't change capitalist society in the name of Socialism, because Socialism seems to have been tried and found tired, then how in God's name can you change it? And God's name is relevant here for it is this kind of impasse that has partly caused the limited religious revival amongst the young.

In other words, the disillusionment of Amis' intellectuals is partly the result of the compromising policies of the right-wing leadership of the post-war Labour governments, and of this leadership's false claim to represent Socialism. But not entirely. It is also the result of the class-structure of our society which makes it unlikely that the middle class intellectual will meet or work with the rank and file of the labour movement and so discover, to put it mildly, the difference of emphasis between their thinking and that of the right wing leadership. And finally it is the result of what Amis calls the 'flatulence of parlour Marxism', in other words, his failure to make contact with real Marxists or to have studied Marxism (his acceptance of the common misconception that Marxism offers 'certainty instead of truth' is revealing).

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Yet however we explain the new intellectual's disillusionment, it remains, if permanent, an unsatisfactory state of mind, both socially and for the man himself—as indeed the last sentence in Amis' essay has already implied. It seems that he has no philosophy, no life-view, no world-view. Amis last month admitted this:

> No world-view, it seems to me, comes within light-years of being adequate to the world it professes to categorise. Each fact, each entity, each event is unique. To pretend otherwise is Victorian system-building.

Now first, this opinion leads logically to nihilism, that is, the denial of any thinking at all. Because thinking is precisely the process of finding the connections and relations in the existing world, in nature and society, in order to be able to control them. Of course, all the established systems have to be constantly checked, modified, scrapped, re-created. This constitutes the history of thought—and not only the Victorian history. But to reject the possibility of any kind of system is to reject the possibility of any kind of progress.

The second consequence of such a position is even more serious. It forms its own vicious circle. One of the most striking features of the pamphlet is its isolated parochialism. Britain—and only a part of Britain—exists in a vacuum. There is no sense that—now more than ever with the dual threat and promise of atomic science—man, the individual, does not exist in isolation, but in society. Every man and every event is in some respects unique. But what is always critically important is what they have in common. One discovers the profound nature and the full extent of what they have in common by allowing one's thinking to develop from the experience of working with other men for obvious common interests or against obvious common dangers. A world-view is not just for categorising the world; it is a working hypothesis by which one strives to change it. Amis, I think, cannot accept anything so approximate because he stands apart, and he stands apart because he cannot accept it. He values the unique because he lives ideologically in a world with a unique centre—himself. 'Perhaps politics,' he says, 'is a thing that only the unsophisticated can go for'. The unsophisticated are less aware of the unique. I understand fully how easy it is for an artist in our society to get into this position—and Amis is an artist rather than a political thinker. Everything encourages it. But nevertheless it remains true that disillusion, whatever objective explanations there may be for it, is finally the result of being bored with oneself.

Amis has too lively a mind not to realise this quite soon.

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ARREST OF JENNY AND ELEANOR MARX

[*The Commune of Paris, proclaimed March 18, 1871, was short-lived: but it had an imperishable epitaph written by Marx as the* Address of the General Council of the International on the Civil War in France. *Two months later the over-burdened Marx wrote to Kugelmann that 'the work for the International is immense, and in addition London is over-run with refugees, whom we have to look after'. The General Council held a momentous conference in the third week of September. In her letter, Jenny Marx, after telling Kugelmann details of the plight of the refugees and the strain put on her over-worked and sick father ('Mohr'), gives an account of the conference which we print. Then follows the story of the arrest of Jenny and her youngest sister Eleanor ('Tussy') while the letter ends with upbraiding an Irish Fenian who had succumbed to the campaign of calumny in the capitalist press.—Ed., L.M.*]

October 3, 1871.

MY DEAR DOCTOR. . . .

Your fears with regard to the importation from France of *mouchards* [police spies] is but too well founded. Happily, the council has taken its precautions. To give you proof of the success of those precautionary measures, I need only tell you that the Inter. [national] held a conference from the 17th up to the 23rd, and not a single paper knew of it. On the 24th a Banquet wound up the proceedings. Mohr was made to preside on the occasion (much against his will, as you may imagine), and he had the honour of having on his right hand the heroic Polish general Wroblewski. On the other side sat the brother of Dombrowski. A great many members of the Commune were present. From Switzerland, Outine and Perret had arrived as delegates, from Belgium, De Paepe and five others. from Spain, Lorenzo—a most earnest devoted man—Liebknecht and Bebel could not come for want of cash. The Conference has transacted very much business. Among other questions of course the eternal Swiss squabble cropped up.* A special committee was selected to examine the difference. The resolutions it has arrived at will, it is to be hoped, put an end to the underhand

*The Swiss 'squabble' was with the anarchists who were expelled a year later at the Hague Congress.

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machinations of the clique Bakunin—Guillaume—Robin. The following are some of the resolutions on the Swiss affair:

Whereas

The *Alliance of Socialist Democracy* has declared itself dissolved;
and that the conference in its session of September 18th has decided that all the *existing* organisations of the International Association shall be bound henceforward to call themselves and constitute themselves, simply and exclusively as branches, sections, federations, etc., of the International Association with the names of their respective localities attached;
and that branches and existing societies will be prohibited from continuing to call themselves by the names of sects, that is to say, Mutualists, Positivists, Collectivists, Communists, etc.;
and that it will no longer be permitted to any branch or society already affiliated to continue to form a separatist group under the designation of 'propaganda section' belonging to the alliance, etc., charging itself with special tasks outside the common aim pursued by the mass of the militant working class, gathered in the International Association; that in future the General Council of the International Association should interpret in this sense the resolution of the Basle Congress: 'The General Council has the right to admit or to refuse the affiliation of any new society or group, but with right of appeal to the next Congress', etc. etc.

Tussy is calling me—so I must bring this letter to a close. I wished to write also to dear Trautchen, but find I cannot do so today. Will you therefore ask her to excuse me and tell her that every word of the report (in the German paper) concerning our arrest is *untrue.* Instead of our having proclaimed our names at Luchon, every letter was sent to us to the name of Williams or Lafargue. We lived in utter retirement, seeing no one but the doctor, of whom alas, we had need during the whole of our stay. The stay was sad indeed, for Laura's youngest child was ill during the whole time, and after fearful sufferings died, towards the end of July—on the 26th. A few days after the child's death, just as the Lafargues were able to go out a little, M. de Kératry* commenced his *guerre à outrance* [war to the knife] against us. Laura who had joined her husband at Bosost (in Spain) suffered much—her eldest child fell ill, so ill that she thought it would die—it was suffering from dysentery, so prevalent in that part of Spain—and she could not move away, as the Spanish and French police were waiting to arrest her. The child is a little better now. Paul, meanwhile, had escaped by unknown paths into the centre of Spain. Tussy and I had been caught on our return from Bosost, arrested, kept close prisoners for several days in our house and then taken into the Gendarmerie-barracks. The letter found on me I had written to O'Donovan

*Prefect of Police at Paris.

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Rossa. It was an answer to his *shameful* condemnation in the *Irishman* of the Communal movement. I expressed my surprise that *he, of all men,* should believe the infamous calumnies against the Communists, invented by the wretched police organs *le Figaro, Paris Journal, etc.* I claimed his sympathy (he is a power at New York at this moment) and that of his fellow countrymen, for the heroic champions of a better society—for I said, Irishmen less than all others, can be interested in the continuation of the 'present state of things', etc.

Believe me, dear Doctor

Very sincerely yours,

JENNY MARX.

STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ANARCHISTS

[*In a very long letter to Kugelmann Jenny tells of the plight of the Communards in London : 'The infamous calumnies of the shameless newspapermongers have so much prejudiced the English against the Communeux, that they are generally looked upon with unmitigated horror. Employers will have nothing to do with them.' Not only were they refused employment (Jenny herself was sacked from a teaching post when it was discovered who her father was) but were reduced to such straits that 'their sufferings are beyond description—they are literally starving in the streets of this great city'. Jenny concludes : 'For more than five months the International has now supported, that is to say, has held between life and death the great mass of exiles. But its resources are now exhausted.' She tells how much all this worried Marx, who had not only 'to fight with all the Governments of the ruling classes' but had other combats on behalf of the exiles—all when he was doing his utmost to finish the second edition of* Das Kapital *(Leipzig, 1873). In the rest of the letter, amid much else, and apart from the news of the International (printed below) Jenny warns the Kugelmanns that : 'unless you make up your mind to come to London during the next spring or summer, you may no longer find us here, as the English government is taking underhand measures to introduce a bill for the expulsion of Communists and Internationals. The prospect of settling down in the land of Yankee Doodle Dandy is not a very pleasing one to us.' A postscript send thanks for presents, including a portrait of Shakespeare, and says that Marx 'is very much pleased with his bookshelves'.—Ed., L.M.*]

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London, December 21, 1871.

MY DEAR FRIENDS. . . .

The successors of the defunct Alliancists have not given the General Council one moment's peace. During several months they succeeded in carrying their intrigues into every country. They went to work with such wild energy that for some time things looked bad for the future of the International. Spain, Italy, Belgium *apparently* sided with the Bakunin abstentionists,[1] and were against the resolution on the necessity of the Internationals taking part in politics. Here in England this clique of abstentionists intrigued with Bradlaugh,[2] Odgers and their followers; they did not even scruple to make use of the *mouchards* and *agents provocateurs* of Thiers and Badinguet.[3] Their organs, the *Qui Vive* in London, and the *Révolution Sociale* in Geneva, outdid each other in calumniating *'ces autoritaires', 'ces dictateurs', 'ces Bismarckiens' du Conseil General.* Mr. Bradlaugh has resorted to the most miserable misrepresentation to calumniate *'le grand chef de ce conseil'*. For weeks he secretly insinuated at private assemblies, at length he has openly proclaimed at a public meeting that Karl Marx was and is, a Bonapartist. His assertions are based upon the passage in the 'Civil War' in which it is shown that the Empire *'was the only form of government possible'*. Here Bradlaugh stops, omitting the concluding words 'at a time when the bourgeoisie had already lost, and the working class had not yet acquired the faculty of ruling the nation'.

However the success of these intriguers was only *apparent,* in reality they have everywhere been unsuccessful. All their deep laid plots and manœuvres have availed them nothing.

In Geneva, that hotbed of intriguers, a congress representing thirty sections of the International has declared itself for the General Council, has passed a resolution to the effect that the separatist factions cannot henceforth be considered to form part of the International, their acts having clearly shown that their object is to disorganise the Association. That these sections, who under another name, are only a fraction of the old Alliance faction, by continuing to sow dissension, are opposed to the interests of the federation. This resolution was voted unanimously in an assembly of 500 members. The Bakuninists who had come all the way from Neuchatel to be present would have been seriously ill used, had it not been for the men whom they styled 'Bismarckiens', *'des autoritaires'*—Outine, Perret, etc., who rescued them and begged the assembly to allow

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them to speak. (Outine of course was well aware that the best means of killing them altogether was to allow them to make their speeches.)

From Belgium, the news according to De Paepe is equally good. On Sunday a congress is to be held at Brussels.

The Spanish federal council has likewise adopted all the resolutions of the delegates of the Conference, and has exposed the bad faith of the separatist faction.

In America the latter party, represented by section 12,[4] is powerless. All they can do is to disturb the meetings of the other sections.

The London French branch has ceased to exist. Vermersch (*le père Duchêne*) has acted as its undertaker.

I am afraid I have already taken up far too much of your time—yet I must add a few words in reply to your letter, my dear doctor. Papa's opinion is that in the event of a war between Russia and Prussia, Austria will be the scapegoat, and that the wolves will make it up by helping each other to a slice of the lamb. . . .

As to O'Donovan Rossa—I am sorry to say that I believe there is much truth in the reports given of him. He has not answered the letter I wrote him—but has not again attacked the Communists and that is all I wanted.

The Irish in London are entering the ranks of the International. Irish Sections are being formed in various parts of the East End. . . .

Believe me,

Your sincere friend,

JENNY MARX.

[1] Bakunin's followers, the anarchists, who preached *complete abstention from all politics* and at the same time under 'libertarian' slogans (the authority of the majority over the minority was to be ended) carried on a fierce factional struggle within the International against its General Council headed by Marx. See, for example, the detail given in Engels' letter to Cuno of January 24, 1872, and other letters in the Marx-Engels *Selected Works*.

[2] Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891), Radical, republican and atheist: George Odger (1830-1877), shoemaker, secretary of the London Trades Council, president till 1866 of the International which he quitted on its publication of *The Civil War in France*.

[3] L. A. Thiers, French president, 1871-73, organised the massacre of the Communards: Badinguet was the nickname of Louis Bonaparte, the Emperor Napoleon III.

[4] Section 12 in New York was led by Victoria Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin, and adopted semi-anarchist ideas, particularly on 'free love'. They were expelled from the International at the Hague Congress in September, 1872.

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DONA TORR

ALLEN HUTT

DONA TORR, whose lamented death at 73 has deprived the working-class movement of an outstanding Marxist scholar, did not come to the movement and to Marxism in her youth; nor did she come as a member of an exploited class. The Torrs were an old Cheshire county family (with some historic connections with North Staffordshire ironmastering) of the Church and Army type. Dona's father, Canon Torr of Chester Cathedral, was Rector of the substantial Wirral village of Eastham—where the Manchester Ship Canal starts—and her surviving brother is Brigadier Torr, D.S.O., a distinguished infantry officer of World War I and a notable military attaché in the inter-war years. In the tradition of those days she was sent to a finishing school in Germany; it was a studious, not a fashionable, establishment, with a curriculum including music, languages and philosophy (may one speculate that an early acquaintance with Hegel was not without later significance for Dona's development?).

The turning-point must have come when, during the first war, she came to London (already in her early thirties) to pursue advanced studies in Old Icelandic under Professor W. P. Ker. Acquaintance with Gerald Gould, assistant editor of George Lansbury's original *Daily Herald,* led to her engagement as librarian of the paper when it was resumed as a daily in March, 1919. In the *Herald* library she was joined by Walter Holmes, whom she was later to marry; he brought her into the left wing of the old Guild Socialist organisation, and thus into the Communist Party when it was founded in the summer of 1920.

From this point on Dona's career has been well documented in her obituary notices. But it is worth recalling how her years on the *Herald*—she left in 1923 for a research job—brought her into practical touch with trade unionism; she was the first clerk of the *Herald* N.U.J. chapel, with one of the famous founders of the Union, the late Walter Betts, as the Father. Her journalistic skill was thereafter always at the disposal of the movement. At a crucial period she stepped in as general editorial factotum of *Workers' Life,* the Communist Party weekly, and during 1927 was responsible for the whole exacting process of sub-editing, make-up and putting to press (why one obituarist should have called this a 'humdrum task' is beyond me). Later at one point she performed the same function for

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Labour Monthly, during R.P.D.'s illness-enforced absence abroad. I saw for myself how splendidly she got on with the *Workers' Life* compositors; and the hard-bitten old-timers of the Utopia Press did not normally take kindly to women journalists.

Life begins at fifty, they say; and Dona was approaching that age when she embarked on her career of Marxist scholarship with her sojourn at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow to translate and edit the standard English edition of the *Selected Correspondence* (1934). This was followed in 1938 by an edition of the first volume of *Capital* with a supplement (edited and translated by herself) of four appendices including prefaces by Marx and Engels and her own notes on the 1887 English edition. These would have been enough to establish her reputation; but there was more to come.

Three main streams of scholarly activity ran together during the last score of fertile years of her working life. There was her editing of Marxist texts—like the two-volume *Marxism, Nationality and War* (1940) and *Marx on China* (1951)—and general editing of the work of others, like the four-volume *History in the Making* series (1948-49). There was the labour of encouraging, teaching, guiding the young historians turning to Marxism, by correspondence and personal discussion, with which marched her author-developing task as editorial director of Lawrence and Wishart. Last, and too often least, came her own original research and writing, of whose quality at full length we have our first and only taste in volume I of her *Tom Mann and His Times* (Lawrence and Wishart, 21s.); of this more below.

In December, 1935, the *Daily Worker* carried a little note announcing that Dona was at work on a biography of Eleanor Marx. I have often regretted that she changed her mind and decided on Tom Mann instead. Dona on Eleanor would have been from all points of view an outstanding and exciting work. Still, there was even more to be said for Tom as a study; and so rich was the harvest that Dona reaped from her researches that the first volume, originally scheduled for December, 1939, held up by the war and re-scheduled for 1946, was so radically reconstructed by her that eventually it was only in our hands at the end of 1956. The delay was the price she paid for her expending of herself on others.

If *Tom Mann and His Times* was 'done twice' the result is certainly a perfected piece of work: it is sad that the work could not have been completed by the same hand. With Tom Mann as the central figure—linking back through his grandfather to the pre-industrial Midlands of the 18th century and forward to the Commu-

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nist Party—the rich and varied period of the transition from classical capitalism to imperialism, and the foundation of the modern Labour and Socialist movement, is illuminated with a wealth of new material. The Warwickshire background of Tom's boyhood is evoked in a most masterly and moving fashion (note well the terrible picture of the 'weaving boys', little lads of nine turning the looms by hand because their labour cost less than steam power; this in the 1860s). The slow and painful groping of the pioneers like Tom towards Socialism is illustrated stage by stage—and stages not the less real and important because today they may sound odd; the Church, the temperance movement, food reform, and the works of Mill, Carlyle and Ruskin.

The special value of the book is its vivid analysis and presentation of the re-birth of Socialism, the founding of the modern movement, the transformation brought by the great Dock Strike and the 'New Unionism'. Not for nothing did Engels, speaking of the new militant leaders, rate Tom Mann as the best among them. These richly documented pages justify that praise by Communism's co-founder, and make especially clear how Tom combined solid Socialist principle with an unerring feeling for the masses and a perpetual awareness of the snares of sectarianism.

The incisive, but balanced, portrayal of Hyndman (an example of the 'cult of the individual' if there ever was one) is one of the best that we have. As Tom said of him:

> For many years he attached no importance whatever to the trade union movement, and his influence told disastrously on others.

Or again:

> Had it been the recognised and persistent policy to attach what I call proper importance to the co-operative and trade union movements, the growth of the S.D.F. would have been far more rapid and there would have been no necessity for . . . the Independent Labour Party.

By contrast—and the point is particularly well developed here—we have Tom's own appreciation of the fundamental importance of the hours question, and his pioneer campaign for the legal Eight-Hour Day; this was the key to the linking of trade unionism and Socialism, this was the economic demand with basic, indeed revolutionary, political implications.

The book's theme, as its title indicates, includes the 'times' as well, and indeed as much, as its hero. Here is painted a broad canvas of capitalist society at a key period. Thus it fulfil's Dona's own behest to Marxist historians—which I heard her enunciate at her 70th birthday celebration—to give the younger generation an accurate picture of what capitalism was really like.

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LABOUR DISCUSSION FORUM

AN L.C.C. MEMBER, *a leading shop steward and trade union organiser are amongst those writing on the Rent Bill, overtime, youth, workshop and office organisation, etc. Union members represented include Electricians, Clerks, Engineers, Journalists and General Workers. Letters are now arriving from abroad, proving that readers are not tied to their own parish pump. Last day for April issue (short letters, please): Thursday, March 7, to:*

THE EDITOR, LABOUR DISCUSSION FORUM,
134, Ballards Lane,
London, N.3.

★

Overtime? Here's my answer

Lecturing Evans for his contribution on why he works overtime is just not good enough. He honestly states his reasons and attempts to justify them in a fashion that requires a reasoned reply. He says, no doubt with an uneasy conscience, what many thousands think privately but refuse to debate.

Why is overtime worked? A worker does overtime, not because he desires to lengthen the working day and week, but simply because he sees it as the quickest, easiest and most convenient method of increasing his weekly earnings, and very often for the most laudable reasons. It is the means of supplying his family with certain necessities and luxuries—T.V., a holiday by the sea, perhaps a new carpet or an outfit for the girl just commencing grammar school; and to ensure an adequate supply of food and clothing. This basic loyalty of the British workman to family, this desire to provide for the needs of his children, to give them (as he sees it) the best possible start in life, is not something about which we can sneer; we ought rather, in the most serious fashion, to turn it into right channels.

Having no faith (quite correctly) in the permanence of full employment and the continued buoyancy of our economy, Evans and many thousands more argue that this 'easy' overtime cannot continue, that we pick up what we can while we can; that we are average trade unionists, harming neither the movement nor our fellows; and whilst long hours may undermine our health, we are prepared to make the sacrifice for the reasons already mentioned. Overtime earnings, certain forms of bonus payments, working wives, all provide a cushion against the 'fodder basis' of basic wage rates, and help to hide how low they are; but it would be an error to assume that it is overtime earnings which prevent militant struggle.

Militant struggle for a drastic redistribution of the national income only comes from a class conscious understanding of the nature of capitalist exploitation; that these things for which Evans and Co. work overtime should be ours by right; and we shall have them, by reducing and ultimately ending that part of the national product going in rent, interest and profit. Too often some attempt to blame overtime for lack

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of militancy, rather than to examine inadequacies of our propaganda, methods of organisation and inability to explain wages and profits in simple class terms. If low wage rates and the absence of overtime earnings automatically led to militant struggle, then the county council road sweepers and shop assistants would be permanently on strike.

Our basic argument against overtime is that it intensifies exploitation, gives the employer a greater share of the surplus product created during the additional hours of labour, and reduces leisure. We fight for increased leisure so that the worker can enjoy the companionship of his family and fellows; pursue healthy recreation; develop his talents and abilities; enjoy and further enrich our cultural heritage; and have time and energy to play some part in transforming British capitalist society so that life may be led to the full.

Having stated the principle, let us examine his 'special case' and reply to his query: 'What am I to do?' Quite frankly, I am more concerned about consistent overtime working in large and apparently well-organised factories than in his case. Unlike in a factory, I suspect that whilst the hours may be recorded and paid for he doesn't work them, even although he may be on the job. Not only does the job lend itself to it, but our friend Evans claims to be 'crafty', and know how to work 'without killing himself'. It is an all-too-common practice in contracting work of this character, and certainly on 'country jobs', to estimate the worth of the job in relation to the maximum permitted hours. When questions are being asked about conditions on a 'country job', the first question usually is: 'How many hours, guv'nor?' The lodging allowance is invariably inadequate, men feel they may as well be at work as sitting in their digs; and the additional earnings are often the only inducement to get labour to travel to outside contracts.

Labour power is a commodity bought and sold on the market like other commodities. In capitalist society its bargaining power is greatest when in short supply. Overtime working assists in overcoming labour shortage and hence weakens bargaining power; this is the point that Evans must grasp. Many cases can be cited where employers, faced with the difficulty of obtaining suitable labour willing to travel to a contract, can say: 'If you go, book a couple of hours on your time sheet each evening.' The basic rate remains the same, and although the worker benefits in immediate gain, all the advantages of this arrangement are with the employer. When faced with labour difficulties and work people in a strong bargaining position, British employers will enter into all sorts of like accommodations *whilst strenuously opposing any advance in wage rates.* Witness the scandalously low base rates in engineering when compared with bonus earnings; note the employers' attitude to today's claim.

Evans asks: 'Until the base rate is forced up at least 75 per cent what can I do?' But we all know that base rates will not be forced up 75 per cent within existing society and forms of collective bargaining. There is no easy or quick solution to his problem; and Evans must know that all sorts of excuses are advanced by all sorts of people for forsaking principle in the interests of immediate gain. You are saying, Mr. Evans, that until 'we', without your help, force up wage rates 75 per cent, you will continue to solve your economic problems by long hours. My advice to you is this:

Call a meeting on your job. Elect

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a shop steward and be prepared to accept that office yourself. (Your letter shows you have talent to organise and negotiate.) By collective decision, limit your hours of labour and force your boss to return more than that 'bit of the purchase price' of your contract that he now gives you in overtime, in some other more acceptable form: increased lodging allowances, travelling time, increased basic rates. You know the conditions and can best formulate the demands. It won't be easy. It will require struggle and sacrifice. But my experience has been that where correct leadership is given the workers will respond. Make contact with other jobs within your firm and attempt to establish organisation. Conduct propaganda and win conconviction for struggle around all general wages applications; and the extent that you and thousands of others participate is the extent that we shall force up wage rates by '75 per cent' and ultimately end exploitation for all time.

In those conditions your attitude to long hours will alter; indeed, you will find it increasingly difficult to find the time to work overtime.

SID MAITLAND,
E.T.U. *London Airport.*

What the Briggs affair proves

Engineers should stop arguing the toss about whether guerilla strikes are better tactics than a two-day stoppage, and start overhauling workshop organisation. Nothing will be got without it. Branches can keep brothers informed locally; districts can mobilise support; head offices can negotiate and co-ordinate nationally. But if these are not based on workshop organisation, they are based on nothing. That is true whether the problem is controlling excessive overtime, fighting off redundancy or putting punch into the wage claim. The Briggs business proves it. When the press hates you and stops calling you statesmanlike, you're doing all right.

HARRY STACY,
Elland.

Down to Earth on Rents

The letters on the intention of the Tory Government in their new Rent Bill are of interest and value, but they seem to lack the urgency the situation requires. While it is important to forecast events, a close reading of the minutes of the Standing Committee makes it obvious that the Tories themselves are uncertain about the results on specific points. Yet what has emerged, however, is that in addition to the transfer of money from the pockets of the majority to those of the property-owning section of the public, this Bill is in every detail a deliberate attack upon the working class. It is cast in such a way as to make psychological as well as economic attacks upon tenants.

For example, the first section dealing with controlled houses allows for the 'annual amount' to be settled, if in dispute, by recourse to the County Courts. In the past, tenants in unfurnished lets where there is a charge for service, for furniture, or shared accommodation have applied to Rent Tribunals, manned by local citizens. Now tenants may find themselves having to accept, unwillingly, the landlord's figure or institute legal proceedings in the County Courts themselves, a procedure that the average tenant finds frightening. Further there is, to date, no guarantee that legal aid will be made available. In this, as throughout the Bill, the onus is placed upon the tenant to the landlord's advantage. Nor can the homeless citizen expect much help from his local council (especially in the large towns) limited as these ham-

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strung bodies are by shortage of land, high priced land, high interest rates, and now the de-rating of commercial properties which will cause a further increase in rate charges that have to be borne by all tenants. In this climate of reaction I am moved to consider practical steps rather than to speculate upon the *minutiæ* of Tory aims. Here are three conclusions:

First, every effort should be made to unite municipal and private tenants in understanding and opposing the Bill. Now is the time to overcome the undeniable disunity to be found, even amongst members of the Labour movement, between the 'I-have-not-got-a-council-house,-why-should-it-go-on-my-rates?' group and municipal tenants.

Second, Labour authorities should seize the opportunity to take more courageous action with regard to their own rent policies (perhaps along St. Pancras lines.) The lowest possible municipal rent should be regarded as the norm to which excessive private rents should be reduced.

Third, if the nature of this Bill is understood, then the return of a Labour Government at the next election is assured; and on this point may I suggest that readers turn again to Sir Richard Coppock's article in your January issue. The warning it contains is a timely one and I believe that it is upon the lines he suggests that we should consider future national housing plans. We cannot afford a Labour Government with a plan that does not work.

PEGGY A. MIDDLETON,
Blackheath.

Don't hire the Albert Hall!

I feel great sympathy with J.K.W. the 'only C.A.W.U. member of a clerical staff of 40 in a firm of merchant traders'. In such a small staff, which probably consists of clerks having various skills, *e.g.* bookkeepers, shorthand-typists, etc., it is only too easy for the boss to divide and conquer. He may be forced into recognising his manual or technical workers' organisations; but he'll fight with every weapon to prevent any feeling of solidarity between them and his office staff. (After all, clerks see too much of the game!) Thus it profits him to sweeten his clerical staff and to pick out the 'loyalest' to be blue-eyed boys and girls. Nevertheless, thousands of office workers could be won to the principle that co-operation and loyalty to each other can best defend common interests. That their interests need defending is becoming increasingly obvious. Their standards are already comparatively more reduced than many other classes of workers because they are so poorly organised; and Suez, the Rent Bill and rising living costs are hitting them very hard.

In my opinion the most valuable and educational and necessary step for them to take is to join a union. Have a shot at it, J.K.W. Don't isolate yourself. You don't have to hire the Albert Hall and call a public mass meeting! Get some member of your C.A.W.U. branch to help. Introduce him to the two socialists, if possible, and one or two other trustworthy staff members, asking them to meet your friend who 'got something going in his office'. An informal and friendly talk like that over a beer or coffee would certainly make the next step clearer. Perhaps other union branch members, or even the Area Office, could help; especially in introducing people with comparable experiences of not dissimilar offices. I'm sure the union could let you have ammunition in the form of agreements on grading and wages made in similar establishments to your own.

In addition to their need for trade

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union organisation, clerical workers too can be won either for progress or reaction. They may not be so vital to the establishment of socialism as miners or factory workers, but the value of their allegiance is well recognised by the ruling class. We should recognise it too.

JOYCE BARKER, *London, N.W.3.*

An Answer for Youth

To know what a problem is makes it that much easier to set about solving it. I think that the letter in the February *L.M.* by John Lawrence 'Well, why not ask the youth?' shows that he goes a long way at least towards finding out what the problems of youth are.

Just a suggestion how youth can 'be helped to be aware of themselves as a force', the guarantee of their finding their solutions. Many difficulties could be overcome if trade unions and the T.U.C. had their own youth sections, holding annual conferences, where they could freely discuss their own problems, ideas and points of view. I don't think youth wants to hear about old militants and actions of the past. They are more concerned with the future; and if they can chart it within the labour movement, I believe they will settle their own problems.

But the T.U.C. at its last conference rejected a resolution calling for a National Youth Advisory Committee. It was a very short-sighted decision, every progressive and militant who feels concern must struggle to win the movement to recognise this need of youth. We cannot afford to sit back and condemn young people for high spirits, for wanting to enjoy themselves whilst they are young; we must fight alongside them, to help make them a part of the movement to ensure the future to the workers.

STAN TURNER, *Middlesex.*

What *is* special to Britain?

The three Labour M.P.s, Messrs. Crossman, Silverman and Parkin, writing on Socialist-Communist relations, would all, I think, agree that the road to socialism for Britain must be such as takes into account the specific features peculiar to Britain. Certainly Communists have for years loudly insisted upon it in their speeches.

But each side must first enlighten us just what are these special British features, in their opinion? I pause—for the rush of phrases about the beauties of parliamentary democracy (ignoring subversive remarks about 'unseated Sinn Fein candidates' or Proportional Representation); a judicial system second to none (or is that the National Health Service?); and the great democratic traditions of the mass organisations (including Labour peers, 'demarcation disputes', bans and disaffiliations). When this all-too-familiar clamour has died down a little, might I point out that there is at least one feature which none of them refers to, which makes Britain different from any other country in the world; and which has governed, is governing and will govern what road Britain takes to socialism. This unique feature is the continued existence of the vast British colonial empire, in the interests of the ruling class, dearly paid for by the workers, and policed, partitioned and occupied by their sons.

There can be no socialism in Britain whilst that continues; and the party which succeeds in rousing the British labour movement to it will lead Britain to socialism, whether it calls itself the Labour Party, the Communist Party or the United Order of Ancient Britons.

W. H. DALY,
Belfast.

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Putting it briefly . . .

Why is the British press silent about the revolting persecution of the three American editors of the *China Monthly Review*? I had to learn the facts from a Peking pamphlet of a Defence Committee (Chairman: Rewi Alley). The magazine, founded in 1917 in China to tell Americans the truth about events there, went on until 1953. When its three editors then returned to U.S.A., they were set on by Congressional committees, asked to spy on China and now face 20 year or life sentences for 'sedition' in March. First the Rosenbergs and Morton Sobell, now John and Sylvia Powell and Julian Schuman. And not a word from our free and liberal press, save the mark! Yet it is honest, courageous people like this, who stand firm in the hard times, who will yet make America indeed the 'land of the free and the home of the brave'.—*R.T., Norwich.*

About the M.P.'s articles, I agree to a certain extent with some of the arguments brought forward by Mr. Silverman. But while he refers to the Hitler-Soviet Pact, he makes no mention of his own country's Munich Pact which caused it. And he says nothing of the U.S. air force stationed in Britain with the latest nuclear weapons, based there for one purpose only. As one well-known American magazine says, 'We have now the potential to wipe the Soviet Union from the face of the earth'; or, as the night after Christmas, an American speaker said 'We have an army in Europe of 250,000 men with more *killing power* than any army of its size on earth'!—*E.H.T., Canada.*

Capitalism needs co-existence, despite contradictions and complexities of the world scene. The capitalist class may fall to the lure of unlimited markets and a longer lease of life through co-existence. We tend to forget that the whole basis of capitalism is commodity production: that is, markets. This, and the certainty that the socialist world has come to stay and cannot be bullied around, may make them accommodate themselves. L.M. could usefully have an article on it.—*A.M., Essex.*

The 11-plus exam is no good. My teacher does not like it. My mother and dad say it is all wrong. I did not like it much myself (I have just done it). You say, ask the youth about things. If you ask me, I think we children ought to go on strike. If we all did, it would be the same for us all.—*L.N., Manchester.* (Aged 11.)

On West Europe it is very difficult to form a balanced judgment because of lack of true facts. Could we please have some articles, factual and up-to-date, on the industrial and political position in Italy, France, Spain and Austria, written by Marxists preferably in those countries?—*N.D., Notts.*

★

(This month the Committee felt that the prize of ONE GUINEA *must be divided between* 'OVERTIME? HERE'S MY ANSWER' *by Sid Maitland and* 'DOWN TO EARTH ON RENTS' *by Councillor Mrs. Peggy Middleton, L.C.C.)*

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Book Review

OUTER MONGOLIA

Land of Blue Sky, by Ivor Montagu. (192 pp. Illustrated. Dennis Dobson. *25s.*)

WHEN the Royal Central Asian Society, always regarded as a stronghold of crusted Tories, invited Ivor Montagu last September to lecture on his travels in Mongolia, it showed some breadth of outlook in thus recognising the worth of someone who is more than a globe-trotter. When *The Times Literary Supplement* dismissed this book in a few lines of 'Books Received', with Budapest dragged in, it made an exhibition of itself. That the book bids fair to become a best seller is perhaps a measure of the small effect of the review in the T.L.S. (now put in the background by the Thursday Literary Page of *The Times*—which, incidentally, gave a very different sort of review on February 14). In fact, this travel book with its wealth of illustrations in colour-photography and in black and white, gives the most up-to-date survey available of a state which, though an ally of Britain in the final period of the war, has been seldom visited by British geographers or travellers.

In 1920 Outer Mongolia, now the Mongolian People's Republic, was a little cattle-breeding country with some 600,000 half-starved and ragged inhabitants. They were virtually serfs to their nobles and 700 monasteries (lamaseries), the latter acting as collective and exceptionally parasitic feudal chiefs. Illiteracy was almost universal, epidemic diseases were rife, child mortality under three years was 480 per 1,000. The country had scarcely any industry of its own beyond a few workshops: though foreign companies worked two small gold deposits and a tiny coalfield, there was no railway, no national currency, no banking, practically no home trade beyond a barter system. Transport was by camel and bullock-cart. The great mass of the people—the arats or peasantry—lived on the meat and milk of their livestock and used their skins, furs and bones for household goods. What products they disposed of went to foreign traders at grossly unfair prices. A British visitor in 1916 described the condition of the people as 'dependence, ignorance and poverty'. It is this country which Mr. and Mrs. Montagu visited in autumn 1954.

What did they find in the Mongolian People's Republic? They found no nobles—all their herds were distributed among the arats in the early 'thirties. They found no great herd-owning monasteries: only three or four are left functioning, 'living museums'—and very vividly Montagu describes the flashback to the Middle Ages at one they visited (pp. 45-47). Livestock numbers had gone up from under 10 million in 1918 to over 26 million in 1954—and the average family owns from 150 to 250 cattle per head (it needs about 40 to support life). From feudal conditions the arats have gone forward to free peasant ownership, with a substantial beginning of an advance to socialism along different ways. This has been aided by the development of state owned food and other industries employing 60,000 workers, as well as many artisans' co-operatives.

Illiteracy has almost disappeared: there are hundreds of schools, a university, training colleges, research institutes, many libraries and clubs, a state opera and ballet, 27 national and local newspapers. The epidemics and other diseases have been greatly reduced, plague nearly wiped out. As

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for infant mortality, the best evidence is the rise in the population to over a million (66 per cent. increase in 35 years!). There is a national bank, a national currency and a growing home trade—three-fifths of it done through the co-operatives, which have 250,000 members.

Mongolia has gone forward to the economic conditions and social services of a modern community. Ivor Montagu describes them in lively and humorous reportage of visits to country folk at their homes and to state farms, to an aimak (county) centre over 'roads' which haven't changed a lot since Jenghis Khan's horsemen thudded westward more than 700 years ago. He tells of the unique sports festival of wrestlers, archers and marathon horseraces—with jockeys mostly between 6 and 8 years of age! The author shows how this rebirth of the Mongols has yet preserved their most picturesque national customs. Tiny tots ride to school on horseback: cow's milk is eaten in solid squares, mare's milk drunk fermented in a skin pouch.

But how have they managed to make all the changes while remaining Mongols? Part of the answer is that they have become a People's Democracy—the exploiting classes abolished or (as regards rich peasants) their powers greatly restricted, and the working people freed to elect their Great Hural (Parliament) every three years, and county district and rural councils every two years, by secret ballot: without the 'aid' of capitalist-controlled newspapers and radio, or capitalist parties either. The Mongols, says Montagu, 'have an intense, irresistible, almost romantic pride in national independence'. And they also know that their 'security' is due to Soviet strength, 'nor can any sign be seen' of a time when the self-interest of either Mongolia or the U.S.S.R. will demand a change in their present reciprocally contented relationships' (pp. 163-64). His factual account of why this is so is another most interesting side of a fascinating book.

Everyone who has Cyprus, Malaya, British Guiana, Kenya, Central Africa, Egypt on his or her conscience should read this book. And it would do no harm to Britain's delegates to the United Nations to read it too.

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN.

NAZI RECORD

The S.S., Alibi of a Nation, 1922-1945, by Gerald Reitlinger. (502 pp. Heinemann. 35s.)

'AT least we shall find out how it all worked before we die, even if we had to get here to do it.' This crack of Goering, commenting on a lecture with pointer and gigantic neat diagrams, whereby a naïve American company lawyer sought to guide a bewildered Nuremberg Tribunal through the tangled thicket of overlapping responsibilities in the Third Reich, inevitably comes to mind.

And really the author has done a marvellous job, both as accuser and historian—for how can the historian of such a subject not be an accuser—in dissecting his way through the incredibly interwoven alphabet of initials of State and Party institutions responsible for some four or five million murders under Hitler and Himmler. ('Four or five million'—the very magnitude of this margin of error is measure of horror for this blot on the history of mankind, more particularly on the history of what apologists alike for Suez imperialism, South African racialism and Cold War Crusading delight to call European, Western or even Christian civilisation, and forget, as they boast of its superiority).

As a work of scholarship, thread-

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ing its pioneer way to the heart of the matter, livening and illuminating the way by the pungent, disgusted phrase, and invaluably indexing the available evidence *en route*, this solid book can be compared only to the same author's previous work *The Final Solution*, in which he was the first to identify and begin assessment of the mingled wilful and incidental elements in the extermination of the Jews. Indeed, this is a better and maturer work, because it benefits from the research which had gone into the former.

The main thesis of the book, expressed in its title, is exemplified in the following observation of Reitlinger on the Gestapo:

> It is not realised how little the Gestapo was an independent agency, and how much its powers depended on the co-operation of the entire German bureaucracy. It is not realised that the massive machinery by which more than four million Jews were dragged from their homes to die in often very distant concentration camps, ghettos and gas chambers, could never have been handled by a single obscure department of the Gestapo, could never have been secret and could not have happened at all without the minute interlockings of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministers of Transport, Finance, and Economics, the two High Command Offices, the Ministries of Labour and Armaments, and above all the Foreign Office.

There can be no question but that it is established, remorselessly and successfully, and in relation to all the manifold activities, from the fantastic breeding of Aryans to the prosaic running of mineral water factories, of the wider parent body.

The lessons deriving from this study, which will never degenerate into mere thriller-anecdotage or revenge-satisfaction—are peculiarly vital and topical for to-day.

First, to realise the true nature of the characters involved and their interwoven complicity—an essential corrective to the fashionable heroising of such as Canaris, the July 20th 'Resistance Circle' and the Nazi Speer (e.g., by the gullible Trevor-Roper).

Second, to realise the political implications of the facts, both for internal politics inside Bonn Germany, and for nearer home. The directly guilty numerously survive in life, influence, office and honour in the one. Their protectors and abettors here, who shared the guilt for World War II and all its massacres by fostering and abetting them in the Chamberlain days, still metaphorically dine and wine—and physically and morally arm—them now.

Third, to debunk the appellations 'free' or 'refugee'—with all their overtones of nobility or bids for sympathy—in respect to whole bands of Baltics, Ukrainians, Poles, Hungarians, entertained in Western Europe, U.S.A. and these islands under these disguises ever since 1946. Himmler's S.S. in its latest days comprised these just as abundantly as Germans, but that one's victims were Communists or were Jews is in many contemporary eyes a sure passport to oblivion, even glorification, of such crimes as treason and massacre; and a guarantee for lifelong subsidy to plot, broadcast, foment and promote their repetition. (Remembering this fact might be salutary for some who have been panicked by current events in Hungary into forgetting their common-sense and A.B.C.)

Indeed, on this particular point the author, alas, hovers near a judgment of Himmler that history shows to be

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over-harsh. Reitlinger shows it probable that Himmler 'believed that within a few months the Western Allies would ask him to restore order in Europe or would need his S.S. to fight the menace of Bolshevism', and considers this a final example of his undoubted simplicity and folly. He sought to go underground briefly until that moment came. For the Reichsfuehrer S.S. this hope was no doubt an exaggeration and the period necessary in any case an underestimate. But hosts of his accomplices have barely had to disguise themselves at all to receive the embraces of the fur-coated, the golden approval of the Brothers Dulles, and at last, even blessings from the platform of the Albert Hall.

IVOR MONTAGU.

Shorter Notices

AFRICA SOUTH

Africa South, a quarterly magazine published in Cape Town and distributed mainly in Southern Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States, represents a courageous attempt to present expression of liberal thought and opinion on the problems currently plaguing the Union of South Africa. The magazine is without political party allegiance, but the declared aim is to promote and encourage the founding in South Africa of a multi-racial democracy based on the principle of equal rights for all that country's inhabitants whatever their race or colour. The second number (Jan.-March, 1957), like the first published last October, contains a number of authoritative articles which in the light of the recent treason arrests and bus boycotts provide an excellent and informative background against which much of the internal strains and stresses of a strife-torn country may be more easily understood. *Africa South* wisely avoids the temptation of treating Southern Africa in isolation. It does this by including articles on East Africa (with its somewhat similar multi-racial problems), the rising Negro nations of West Africa and on the Negro emancipation struggles in the United States. A special literature section affords a welcome opportunity to read short stories by obviously talented but little-known (outside South Africa, that is) authors. These include translations from African vernacular literature—a rich source of human feeling and expression.

D.B.

(Price per copy 4s.; annual subscription 16s., from R. Ainslie, 25, Cambridge Gardens, London, W.10.)

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JANUARY: *Britain and the World* (R.P.D.); *Socialist-Communist Relations, III* (Ben Parkin, M.P.); *Housing* (Sir Richard Coppock); *Hungary's Background* (Commander E. P. Young, R.N., Ret'd.); *Letters from Jenny Marx; Youth at Work* (Frank Stanley); *Labour Discussion Forum.* BOOK REVIEWS: *Unmeasured Hazards* (World Federation of Scientific Workers); *Nuclear Explosions and their Effects* (Foreword by Jawaharlal Nehru); *After the Thirties* (Jack Lindsay); *Ivan the Not-so-terrible* (Archie Johnstone); reviewed by D. G. Arnott, Alick West, C.P.D.

FEBRUARY: *True Blue Democracy* (R.P.D.); *Racial Discrimination* (Fenner Brockway, M.P.); *Economic Forecast; Set Stormy* (Henry Collins); *China First Seen* (R. Page Arnot); *Marx and the Fenians; Marx Family Letters; Unstable Giants* (Angela Tuckett); *A Bacchanalia of Lies* (V. I. Lenin); *Labour Discussion Forum.* BOOK REVIEWS: *The Changing Germans* (Paula Wiking); *Science and Civilisation in China, Vol. II* (Joseph Needham, F.R.S.); *From Witchcraft to World Health* (S. and V. Leff); reviewed by Gordon Schaffer, Benjamin Farrington, Bruce Cardew.

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(Continued from page ii of cover)

ganda to conceal their true aim'. Hard-up *Canadians* and *Americans* rush dollars to us. A Canadian pen-pal of long standing strolled in with his donation in person. Would-be emigrants might note that it was the first return of this native in over 30 years. Gold nuggets are not lying there waiting the picking; no, not even the all-pervading and invading U.S. dollar. Talking of links with overseas, more than one reader mentions sending specimen copies abroad. Although the best introduction, perhaps, is the magazine itself, it is worth remembering that the L.M. Midget is still available, reproducing the first page of 30 articles showing title and author; it gives a good impression of the variety. (See the back cover.) To win new readers means learning the lesson of the appeal response: how varied our supporters are. Pick the right article to introduce it, and a reader is won. Take the current number. Where else could you possibly get these two items? New poems by a world-famous figure like Mao Tse-tung, specially translated by that unique New Zealander Rewi Alley, who introduced co-operatives to China a quarter of a century ago—himself no mean poet, as L.M. readers will recall. All within less than a month of first publication! Second item: an objective historical picture of Workers' Councils. How many who have been eagerly discussing these know the facts of how when and where they have already worked or failed? Facts first, arguments afterwards is a sound rule. Here's the facts.

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John Lawrence, February prizewinner in our Labour Discussion Forum, £1 1s. He says: 'Every week I have a line on the pools and get no returns. The first time I have a couple of lines with *L.M.* I am lucky enough to hit the jackpot. Now, what to do with the prize money? Why, invest it, of course. So here is my chance to risk some capital, like other people who risk capital, on a dead cert.'

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TO THE MANAGER, 134, BALLARDS LANE, LONDON, N.3

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